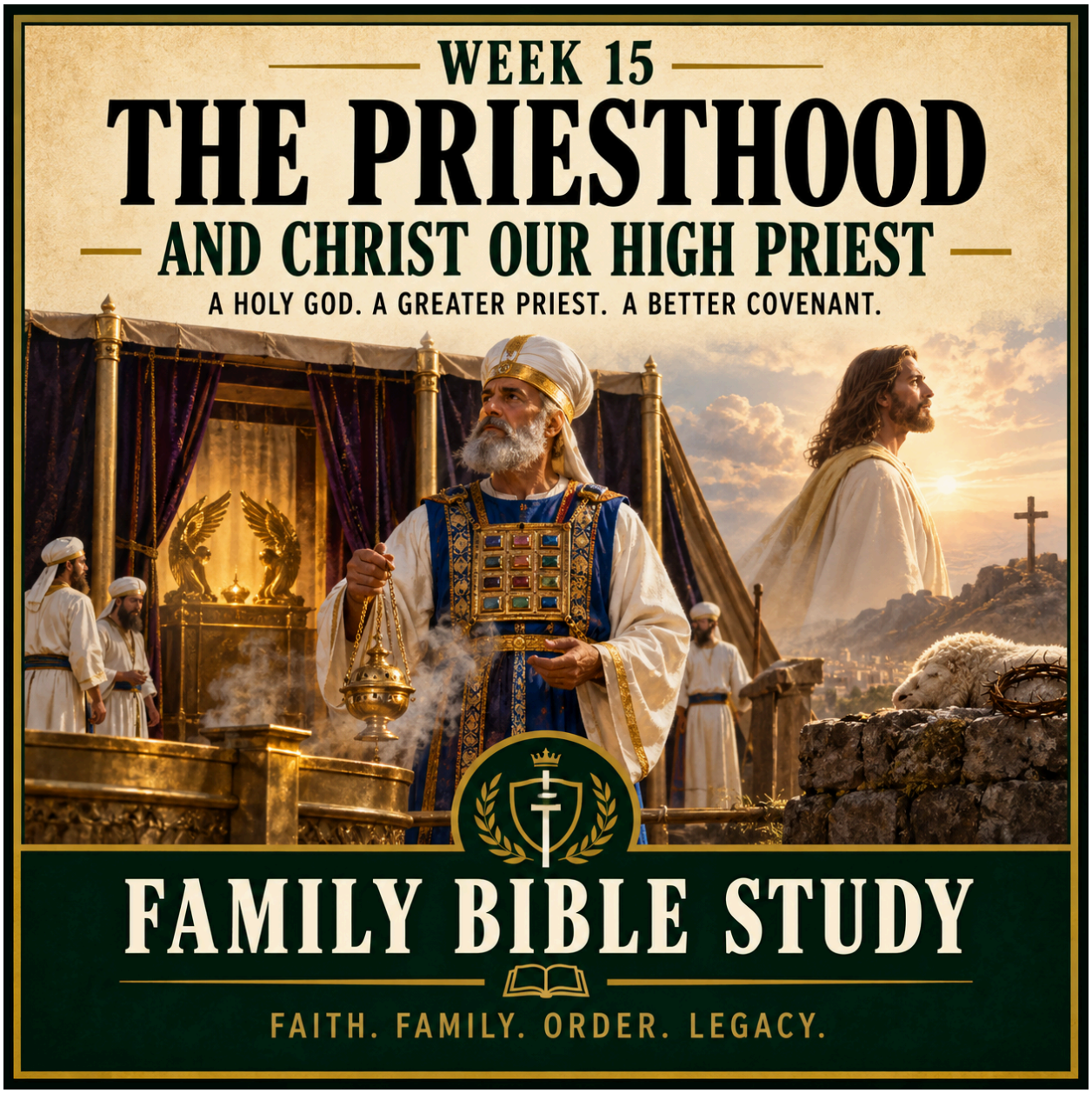

Week 15: The Priesthood and Christ Our High Priest

A Sabbath Family Bible Study

📣 Introduction

When God brought Israel out of Egypt, He called them to be a holy people and established the priesthood so that they might approach Him according to His order. Aaron and his sons were set apart for this sacred responsibility, serving as mediators between a holy God and sinful man. The high priest held a unique role, especially on the Day of Atonement, when he alone entered the Most Holy Place with sacrificial blood to make atonement for himself, his household, and the people. This system taught Israel that God's presence was holy: sin is serious, holiness matters, and access to God required mediation and atonement.

The Levitical priesthood pointed forward to something far greater. Aaron and every priest who followed him eventually died, and their sacrifices had to be offered repeatedly. Jesus Christ, however, is our perfect and eternal High Priest. He is holy, sinless, and possesses an unchanging priesthood; rather than repeatedly offering the blood of another sacrifice, He offered Himself and now lives to make intercession for His people. Because of Him, we may “come boldly unto the throne of grace,” trusting not in our own righteousness but in His. This week we will examine how the priesthood, sacrifices, and ministry of the high priest reveal the holiness of God and ultimately point us toward the perfect work of Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest.

📖 Scripture Reading:

(Exodus 28:1–3; Leviticus 16:1–17; Hebrews 4:14–16; 7:23–28)

With Commentary Throughout

Exodus 28:1

> ***1*** *“And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.”*

Commentary:

The Levitical priesthood was divinely established. Aaron and his sons were set apart to mediate between the holy God and sinful man. Their calling was sacred and not optional. This teaches that approaching God requires mediation, reverence, and purity.

Exodus 28:2–3

> ***2*** *“And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.”*

3 "*And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office."*

Commentary:
Even the priest's garments reflected God's glory and order. Every thread declared that ministry before the Lord must be consecrated, not common. These garments foreshadow the perfect righteousness of Christ, our ultimate Priest.

Leviticus 16:2, 15–17

2 "*And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat."*

15 "*Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:"*

16 "*And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness."*

17 "*And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel."*

Commentary:

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place with sacrificial blood. This annual ritual reminded Israel of sin's seriousness. Access to God was limited, only one man, one time per year. This points forward to Christ, who would open the way once for all.

Hebrews 4:14–16

14 "*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession."*

***15 "**For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."*

***16 "**Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

Commentary:

Jesus is our High Priest, perfect, sinless, and eternal. Because He has passed into the heavens and sympathizes with our weakness, we may now approach God boldly, with confidence rooted in Christ's righteousness, not our own.

Hebrews 7:24–26

***24 "**But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."*

***25 "**Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."*

***26 "**For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;"*

Commentary:
Unlike the priests of old, Jesus is holy and eternal. His priesthood is unchanging and sufficient. No repeated sacrifices are needed, He intercedes forever, having offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice. In Him, we are cleansed, accepted, and heard.

🗣️ Discussion Questions for All Ages

Young Children:

- What did the priest do in the Old Testament?
- Who is our priest now?
- What does Jesus do for us in heaven?

Older Children & Teens:

- Why could only the high priest go into the Most Holy Place?
- How is Jesus' priesthood better than Aaron's?
- What does it mean to "come boldly to the throne of grace"?

Adults:

- How does Christ's priesthood shape your daily prayer life?
- In what ways do we sometimes try to approach God on our own terms?
- How can we model reverence and dependence on Christ in our homes?

📜 Psalm Reading

Psalm 110:1–4

> ***1*** *"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."*
>
> ***2*** *"The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."*
>
> ***3*** *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."*
>
> ***4*** *"The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."*

Commentary:
This messianic psalm prophesies the eternal priesthood of Christ, not according to Aaron's line, but after Melchizedek: a priest-king, appointed directly by God. Jesus now sits enthroned in heaven, interceding for us as both Priest and King.

🎶 Hymn: "Crown Him with Many Crowns"

By Matthew Bridges (1851)

1.
Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King through all eternity.

2.
Crown Him the Lord of love; behold His hands and side,
Rich wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified.
No angel in the sky can fully bear that sight,
But downward bends his burning eye at mysteries so bright.

3.
Crown Him the Lord of peace, whose power a scepter sways
From pole to pole, that wars may cease, and all be prayer and praise.
His reign shall know no end, and round His pierced feet
Fair flowers of paradise extend their fragrance ever sweet.

4.
Crown Him the Lord of years, the Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime.
All hail, Redeemer, hail! For Thou hast died for me;
Thy praise shall never, never fail throughout eternity.

🏡 Family Application Points

1. **Honor Christ as High Priest in Daily Life:**
   Begin and end each day with prayer, recognizing that you approach God only through Jesus. Teach children to pray “in Jesus’ name” with understanding.

2. **Practice Reverence in Worship:**
   Just as the priests approached God with care, so should we. Teach children that worship is holy. Dress, posture, and speech should reflect that we are coming before a holy God.

3. **Teach Substitutionary Atonement:**
   Use this week to explain that Jesus offered Himself in our place. Reinforce that no other mediator is needed, He is the perfect sacrifice and eternal intercessor.

4. **Build Confidence in God’s Mercy:**
   Help family members, especially teens or the repentant, to understand that they can come boldly to God for forgiveness, grace, and strength because of Christ’s finished work.

5. **Celebrate Christ’s Ongoing Ministry:**
   Discuss how Jesus is still working, not on the cross, but as our interceding High Priest in

heaven. This truth should comfort and embolden your family daily.

🍞 A Sabbath Feast Prayer (Used later when the Sabbath Meal is Ready)

“Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Sabbath - a holy day of rest, joy, and renewal. As we partake in this meal, may our hearts be lifted in gratitude for Your provision and peace. Let this table reflect the peace of Your Kingdom and the love that binds our household together in Christ. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

🙏 Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we praise You for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to be our eternal High Priest. Thank You for His perfect obedience, His holy sacrifice, and His unceasing intercession. Help us to approach You with reverence, gratitude, and boldness, not by our merit, but through His righteousness. Let our home honor His priesthood in prayer, in worship, and in daily obedience. May we trust fully in His mediation and rejoice that we have access to Your throne of grace. In the name of Jesus, our Great High Priest, we pray. Amen.